



Management and Administration

Office of Management and Administration Employee Newsletter

March 2001 Edition

Message from the Acting Director of Management and Administration, Richard Hopf

In late January, as we entered a new phase of the Presidential Transition, I asked all Management and Administration employees and managers to continue to provide timely, responsive, and courteous service to customers and to be supportive of each other as we helped the incoming Administration. I am pleased and gratified to report that MA has done an outstanding job in the intervening weeks, providing a great deal of assistance to the new appointees and other customers under challenging conditions.

One highlight of recent weeks was the luncheon that was held on March 1, 2001, to recognize the efforts of employees who went "above and beyond" their normal duties to assist the transition through preparing briefing materials, managing logistics to ensure that new appointees had comfortable and efficient office space, and completing dozens of personnel actions required to bring people officially on board. We were privileged to have Kyle McSarrow, the new

Chief of Staff, at the luncheon. Kyle expressed the appreciation of the Secretary and his colleagues for the welcome they had received at the Department, and he joined MA staff for the luncheon and for photographs.

The following day, March 2, 2001, MA was instrumental in planning and implementing the swearing-in ceremony of Secretary Abraham. This was a major event that included about 1000 attendees, three former DOE secretaries (Schlesinger, Watkins, and O'Leary), members of Congress, foreign dignitaries, and Abraham family members. The Office of Administration did much of the preparatory work, including printing, travel logistics, room setup, video, and many other activities, and Brian Costlow was the "on scene" manager who coordinated these many functions. Everything went smoothly and Secretary and Mrs. Abraham have expressed their appreciation for our efforts.

While we do not yet have word on the appointment of an MA Director, we are continuing to make progress in preparing MA for the next phases of the transition. Among other things, we are working to

eliminate any backlogs in executive correspondence or reports due to Congress, and we are taking a proactive approach to managing our responses to General Accounting Office and Inspector General reports. The new Business Management Working Group is updating MA mission and function statement and improving our balanced scorecard performance system. Individual MA offices are also making this period, including the MA-3 initiatives to reduce cycle times in personnel action

processing. Finally, I have met with the Chief Financial Officer on the FY 2002 operational improvements during budget discussions. While we expect the final budget to be tight, consistent with the Secretary's guidance, we do not envision the need for any involuntary staff reductions or dramatic changes in services to our customers.

I am proud of the work of MA employees during this transition and look forward to your continued cooperation.

MA Recognizes Transition Support



On behalf of Secretary Abraham, Kyle McSarrow, Chief of Staff, expresses appreciation for the transition support provided by MA staff.

MA staff and Mr. McSarrow at recognition luncheon.



CHRIS News

The Corporate Human Resource Information System (CHRIS) allows human resources offices and employees to streamline work processes and reduce paperwork. The recent performance awards for Headquarters employees were processed in CHRIS using the new automated mass awards process. The within-grade increases (WGI's) for employees are now being automatically processed in CHRIS thus eliminating the need to key these actions manually in CHRIS. Also, a new mass printing process is available to print the SF-50 by group rather than individually.

Through the use of CHRIS/Employee Self Service (ESS), employees have the capability to view personal and training information and update certain payroll and personnel information via the internet. For the recent Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season ending January 31, employees did 45% of the TSP transactions using ESS. To date, there have been over 16,000 transactions done in ESS since the update capability was implemented in 1999. These transactions include home addresses, education information, emergency contacts, office locator, tax withholdings, and much more. About 78% of MA employees are participating, in line with an overall 76% DOE-wide rate. Watch for an updated version of the comprehensive ESS Personal Benefits Statement being issued in mid-March.

You can access the ESS web site from the Management and Administration home page, under the heading "Other MA Links." If you have questions regarding

CHRIS/ESS, contact Letitia Lawson on 202-586-3807.

MA InfoTech Web Page

MA is fast becoming an information-driven organization, and we expect this trend to continue or even accelerate with the new Bush Administration emphasis on electronic government. Last month, MA launched a new Information Technology (InfoTech) web page to meet the needs of both technical and non-technical readers. The new page is one of the hot sites you can reach via the MA home page. It contains detailed information on MA's information management goals, principles, and strategies and serves as a gateway to configuration management and cyber security information. Visitors will also readily find a list of computer help desk numbers and practical links to commonly used software downloads and training opportunities. A revolving tech tip and updated information on MA's increasingly popular computer user forums encourage repeat visits to the site. Check it out at <http://www.ma.doe.gov/infotech.htm>.

See the related article on page 6, MA User Forums, which provides useful tips for making better use of your hardware and software.

Need Help? Check Out the DOE "Yellow Pages"

While you're at the DOE Home page, check out the DOE "Yellow Pages" which is an improved functional directory to meet the every-day information needs of Headquarters employees. If you think of any new services that should be included, or

cross-references to existing listings, please share your ideas with Geri Gunther by e-mail or by calling her on 586-6554.

A Call to Action: A Coalition on the Future of the Federal Human Resource Management Profession

The human resources profession is facing a crisis that may well impact the Federal government's ability to meet mission critical goals in the near future. A number of factors are impacting the profession, among them the "graying" of the workforce, external pressures and competition for the best and the brightest. At the same time, HR is experiencing major change involving HR customers' expectations about service delivery and the need for HR specialists to provide direct and ongoing support in carrying out critical agency missions.

Through the leadership and direction of Tim Dirks, Director of Human Resources Management and his counterpart at the National Institutes of Health, a summit was held in July 2000. Key players from the federal human resources community representing agencies, central oversight organizations and HR professional organizations came together under the auspices of the International Personnel Management Association (IPMA) Federal Section to address the crisis facing the federal human resources profession, to develop a roadmap to the future, to develop partnerships within and beyond the HR community and to share information and successes and to ensure that efforts to address the crisis are carried out in a focused and coordinated manner.

The coalition focused on identifying specific human capital strategies needed to achieve a common vision for the HR profession.

Among these are:

- Deliver customer-focused results in a timely and cost-effective manner;
- Rebuild technical competence while assuming new roles as consultants and business partners with customers;
- Establish a competency-based system for selection, development, promotion and managing performance; and
- Adopt innovative approaches to staffing HR positions at the entry, mid and senior levels by engaging in systematic workforce planning, developing partnerships with educational institutions to ensure that job applicants are able to get essential skills in colleges and universities, and creating and using strategic and total compensation programs to improve recruitment and retention.

The results of the summit were captured in a report "A Call to Action: A Coalition on the Future of the Federal Human Resource Management Profession" (available electronically at <http://www.ipma-hr.org>) co-authored by Stephanie Spence Diamond of the Office of Human Resources Management. Two subsequent meetings have been held where the coalition was addressed by David Walker, Comptroller General (September 2000) and Janice Lachance, former Director, Office of Personnel Management (December 2000). A communication strategy has been adopted resulting in a number of speaking

engagements and articles publicizing the work of the coalition and stimulating further interest, discussion and - most importantly - action. The most recent publication was an article co-authored by Stephanie Spence Diamond that appeared in fall issue of "The Public Manager", a quarterly publication issued by the National Academy for Public Administration. The next meeting is planned for late April 2001 with the Private Sector Council, where top HR executives from the private sector will help the coalition focus on how federal HR leaders can move their organizations to the level where they are partners in the strategic management of the organization.

Should the coalition be successful in translating these strategies into actions, the HR profession will be forever transformed. Ultimately, HR will be better positioned to support agency missions and serve the public good well into the future.

New Computer Security Features Coming Soon

You will soon hear two new acronyms: PKI and VPN. What are they? PKI stands for Public Key Infrastructure and VPN for Virtual Private Network. Both are capabilities that will improve the security of the Department's unclassified systems and data.

PKI is the architecture, organization, techniques, practices, and procedures that collectively support the implementation and operation of a certificate-based public-key cryptographic system. Public keys are mathematical algorithms that can be used either to verify digital signatures or to

encrypt messages or files. Their corresponding private keys are used to create the digital signatures or to decrypt the encrypted messages or files.

PKI implementation will provide:

- Access control;
- User identification and authentication;
- Accountability for electronic transactions;
- Data integrity; and
- Confidentiality of electronic transactions.

PKI services that will be provided include:

- Single sign-on (only one user id and password for access to multiple systems);
- File and directory encryption;
- E-mail encryption for both Outlook and Notes;
- Session encryption; and
- Digital signatures.

PKI capabilities will be especially important for personnel who work with sensitive information or who work from remote locations.

The Chief Information Officer has purchased a tool set called Entrust to implement PKI. Near-term CIO activities include a pilot project for single sign-on and securing remote access services. For single sign-on, CIO selected Employee Self Service (ESS) as the first system for which PKI will be used. Integration of PKI into ESS will permit certificate-based authentication, single sign-on, and digital signature capabilities. Work is underway with a

demonstration of the capability expected in late March.

For remote access, the first step will be implementation of a VPN to replace other remote access capabilities on equipment used for travel or flexiplace. Future activities include the incorporation of the PKI single sign-on and encryption capabilities for remote access using the VPN.

What does this mean for you?

- If you access DOE systems remotely while on travel or flexiplace, you will need to have VPN software installed on your equipment.
- If you manage a system that requires a user id and password, you need to evaluate whether and how to incorporate the PKI interface.
- If you or your system process or store data that requires strong confidentiality, you will need to determine whether and how to use PKI encryption capabilities.
- If you have electronic documents that require signatures, you will need to determine when and how to incorporate the PKI digital signature capabilities into your processing.

Cable Plant Upgrade Installation

The physical installation of cables to upgrade the network connectivity for MA workstations in the Forrestal Building began November 6, 2000, and will be completed in March. Users may have noticed an immediate improvement in throughput and response time following the connection of the faster cable to the desktop. However, the major enhancement is still to come: to reset the network card in each desktop and

the related control software to take advantage of the additional cable capacity. The schedule for this final step in the upgrade process is being developed, with all actions expected to be completed in March. Users will be notified by e-mail when the schedule is established, no later than the day before the final change is made for their workstations. After the reset, users should experience significantly improved transmission speeds - up to ten times faster than was previously available.

User Forums for Computer Tips and Techniques

MA's first User Forum on Computer Tips and Techniques was held in December 2000 on "Archiving E-mail in Microsoft Outlook 98." Forums this year have presented demonstrations on the Executive Information System and Employee Self Service. Future topics will include the Simplified Inventory System (SIS), Backing Up the Hard Drive, Using the Calendar to Schedule Meetings, and Creating Reports with Crystal Report Writer.

The Office of Business Management (OBM) is sponsoring the User Forums to help MA staff improve their use and management of MA's desktop resources. Forums are planned for 2 PM on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. OBM is partnering with the Office of Training and Development to hold future sessions in the Washington Area Development Centers. Using the centers will allow attendees to take advantage of hands-on capabilities to practice the techniques demonstrated. Watch for the announcements and plan to improve your computer skills by attending.

Our Customers Say...

- Bill Pearce (MA-31) “I want to express my appreciation to you for allowing Bill Pearce to visit the Ohio Field Office yesterday. Bill performed the desk audits and conducted a focus group meeting with training. In our close out Bill stated that he will provide me a proposed classification and evaluation statement for the personnel management positions in my office. I really appreciate his professional demeanor and the matter that he performed his tasks. Again, this support is truly appreciated, because I know you are very busy.” (Ken Briggs, Ohio Operations Office, February 2001)
- Alison Davidow and Gerald Shaw (MA-32) “This is to express appreciation for the help and assistance provided by HQs staff in our efforts to obtain approval for one buyout. We realize the request was out of cycle. Nonetheless, you and your staff were willing to take the necessary steps to help us. We appreciate your efforts to make it happen.” (Ken Briggs, Ohio Operations Office, February 2001)
- Pat Mason (MA-35) “Mr. York really did me a favor when he recommended you to work with me. You were very patient with me even though I was constantly worrying you year after year, until last month when I made the decision to really retire. You are very knowledgeable, patient and helpful. I'm retiring, but I will miss you.” (Dr. Edward B. Barnes, December 2000)
- Tashia Brown (MA-35) “You were really terrific processing my retirement. I found you quite knowledgeable, efficient and very pleasant. You are professional and have a pleasing personality. You are an asset to the Personnel Department. Thanks for all the help you gave to me.” (Dr. Edward B. Barnes, December 2000)
- Warren Thompson (MA-2) “On January 11, a rush job was delivered to the Visual Media and Library Services Group for nine hallway display boards for the Office of Procurement and Assistance Management. Mr. Thompson was acting for the Visual Media Group that day, and provided immediate assistance to our organization. He worked diligently to complete the job expeditiously. His service attitude and professionalism are profoundly appreciated.” (James Cavanagh, January 2001)
- Bill Gillison and Helen Black (MA-2) “I wanted to express my deepest appreciation for the assistance provided to RW by two of your staff members. Both were extremely helpful and accommodating in

resolving some furniture problems RW was encountering. They were successful in orchestrating a win-win solution. Again, please express to them my appreciation and thanks for a job well done". (Christine Lukasik, February 2001)

- Carolyn Keyes (Forrestal) and Betty Williams (Germantown) (MA-2) "I wish to share with you my gratitude and extreme joy for the excellent customer service I received from the Mail Centers at both Germantown and Forrestal. When the regularly scheduled courier service dispatch time could not be met, Carolyn and Betty ensured that an urgent procurement request was promptly and efficiently handled. The mail was delivered within minutes of its arrival on the shuttle bus, and I received a follow up phone message with the time of delivery. Thanks goes to both Carolyn and Betty. Their special service is part of their normal routine, and should not go unnoticed because it's what makes the Mail Centers truly excellent." (Ginny Bitler, February 2001)

Reminder:

**Daylight
Saving Time
Begins on April 1**

Set Your
CLOCKS
Forward

Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead one hour on Sunday, April 1 when we return to Daylight Saving Time.

***Remember:
Spring Forward - Fall Back***